

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8757

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 3732

EO 11652: XGDS 2

TAGS PINR, JM

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE RATTRAY

REF STATE 178557

1. AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE ALFRED RATTRAY IS NOT WELL KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY. THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC DATA, PARTICULARLY THE COMMENTS ON HIS CHARACTER, PERSONALITY, AND ATTITUDES, THEREFORE, ARE IMPRESSIONISTIC AND SPECULATIVE, BEING LARGELY BASED ON SECOND-HAND INFORMATION AND RECENT OBSERVATION OF RATTRAY BY EMBOFFS AT A SERIES OF "GOING-WAY" PARTIES

2. FAMILY: RATTRAY, A METHODIST, MARRIED CYNTHIA LOUISE WESTON ON MARCH 28, 1951. THEY HAVE TWO DAUGHTERS, ELAINE (16) AND CATHY ANN (12), WHO WILL ACCOMPANY THEM TO WASHINGTON. MRS. RATTRAY IS A PLEASANT, SHY, SOMEWHAT PLUMP, "HOMEBODY" TYPE, WHO IS ANXIOUS AND A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HER NEW ROLE AS AN AMBASSADOR'S WIFE

3. ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S.: THE EMBASSY'S BEST GUESSTIMATE IS THAT RATTRAY HAS A RELATIVELY BALANCED VIEW OF THE U.S. HE HAS TRAVELLED TO THE U.S. ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS AND IS THE KEY MAN IN HIS LAW FIRM FOR DEALING WITH AMERICAN COMPANIES. HIS VIEWS ON NATIONALIZATION, AND THE BAUXITE ISSUES, ARE UNKNOWN BUT ASSUMED TO BE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF FORMER AMBASSADOR FLETCHER. RATTRAY IS PRESUMED TO BE
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KNOWLEDGEABLE ON THESE QUESTIONS GIVEN HIS STRONG BACKGROUND

IN COMMERCIAL LAW AND HIS LAW FIRM'S RESPONSIBILITY
FOR FLESHING OUT THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT INITIATED BY TEH
GOJ AND SEVERAL OF THE BAUXITE COMPANIES

4. REASONS FOR HIS APPOINTMENT: NOT KNOWN AS A POLITICAL
FIGURE, RATTRAY'S APPOINTMENT CAME AS SOMETHING
OF A SURPRISE. IT APPEARS THAT RATTRAY WAS THE PERSONAL
CHOICE OF FORMER AMBASSADOR FLETCHER, WHO STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
HIM FOR THE JOB. RATTRAY, HIMSELF, KNEW NOTHING
ABOUT IT UNTIL SUMMONED TO JAMAICA HOUSE AND OFFERED THE
JOB BY MANLEY, WHO SPECIFIED THAT IT WOULD BE FOR A
MAXIMUM OF TWO YEARS. THE EMBASSY SPECULATES THAT,
THWARTED IN HIS EFFORTS TO GET MINISTER OF MINING AND NATURAL
RESOURCES ALLEN ISAACS TO TAKE THE JOB, MANLEY DECIDED
THAT RATHER THAN LEAVE IT UNFILLED HE WOULD COME UP WITH
AN INTERIM APPOINTMENT WHO WOULD SERVE UNTIL HE CAN
CONVINCE ISAACS TO GO OR ANOTHER CONSERVATIVE MEMBER
OF HIS PARTY WHOSE SEAT IN PARLIAMENT HE WOULD LIKE TO
SEE VACATED TO MAKE ROOM FOR SOME OF THE YOUNG
BLOOD IN THE PNP

5. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT: RATTRAY IS A DIFFICULT PERSON
TO GET TO KNOW. HE IS NOT AN EASY CONVERSATIONALIST AND
IS SOMEWHAT AWKWARD AND GRACELESS. HE HAS A REPUTATION
FOR HARD WORK AND SERIOUSNESS; AN IMAGE HE SEEMS TO LIKE
AND ONE WHICH HE APPEARS TO HAVE CULTIVATED ALMOST TO
THE POINT OF POMPOSITY. WHEN ASKED ABOUT RATTRAY'S
HOBBIES, AMBASSADOR FLETCHER REPLIED "WORKS, LOTS OF HARD
WORK. FREDDIE IS NOT VERY SOCIAL".

6. THE EMBASSY HAS GOTTEN A DECIDEDLY MIXED REACTION
LOCALLY TO THE RATTRAY APPOINTMENT. HIS BOOSTERS ARE
NOT OVERLY ENTHUSIASTIC AND TEND TO EMPHASIZE HIS SERIOUS-
NESS, HARD WORK, AND INTELLIGENCE. THE DETRACTORS DO
NOT DISPUTE THE ATTRIBUTES CITED BY RATTRAY'S FRIENDS,
BUT ADD THAT HE IS HUMORLESS, "TOUGHER THAN HELL", A
RACIST, AND POSSIBLY A LESS THAN HONEST PERSON WHO
HAS HIS FINGERS INTO EVERYTHING. THE HINTS OF
CORRUPTION MAY BE NOTHING BUT RUMOR, BUT IT IS A FACT THAT
PNP FIGURES, MOST NOTABLY THE MATALON FAMILY, HAVE
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PROSPERED FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEWPORT WEST, WHICH
WAS UNDER RATTRAY'S DIRECTION AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PORT
AUTHORITY

7. IN SUM, THE EMBASSY EXPECTS RATTRAY TO BE A FORCEFUL
AND BUSINESSLIKE GOJ REPRESENTATIVE IN WASHINGTON. HE
PROBABLY WILL DEMONSTRATE LITTLE INNOVATION OR SPONTANEITY
IN HIS APPROACH TO HIS JOB AND THERE WILL BE A LITERAL

QUALITY OF THE EXECUTION OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM
JAMAICA HOUSE. KINGSLEY

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